



The Spiritual Essence of Hajj

Hajj is not merely a physical pilgrimage undertaken by millions of Muslims each year; it is a profound spiritual journey that transcends time, space, and the material world. It is a sacred invitation from Allah, calling His servants to return to Him with humility, sincerity, and renewed faith. To understand Hajj only in terms of rituals is to miss its deeper purpose—the transformation of the soul.

Allah says in the Qur'an:

“And proclaim to the people the Hajj [pilgrimage]; they will come to you on foot and on every lean camel; they will come from every distant pass.”

(Surah Al-Hajj 22:27)

At its core, Hajj is a journey of return. Every step taken toward the Sacred House is a step away from worldly distractions and toward divine proximity. The pilgrim leaves behind status, wealth, and identity, entering into a state of ihram where all are equal. This uniformity is not incidental; it is symbolic. It reminds us that before Allah, distinctions of race, class, and nationality dissolve. What remains is the essence of the human being: a servant standing before their Creator.

Allah reminds us:

“Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you.”

(Surah Al-Hujurat 49:13)

The spiritual state of ihram is more than a dress code—it is a condition of the heart. One refrains not only from physical prohibitions but also from arrogance, anger, and heedlessness.

Allah says:

“Hajj is [during] well-known months, so whoever has made Hajj obligatory upon himself therein [by entering

the state of ihram], there is to be no sexual relations, no disobedience, and no disputing during Hajj.”

(Surah Al-Baqarah 2:197)

As the pilgrim arrives and beholds the Kaaba for the first time, there is often an overwhelming sense of awe. This is not merely a structure of stone; it is a symbol of divine unity (*tawhid*).

Allah says:

“And [mention] when We made the House a place of return for the people and [a place of] security...”

(Surah Al-Baqarah 2:125)

Circling it during tawaf, the believer enacts a cosmic truth: just as the planets orbit in perfect harmony, so too does the believer's life revolve around the worship of Allah.

The rites of Hajj are deeply rooted in the legacy of Prophet Ibrahim, Hajar, and Ismail (peace be upon them). Their story is not simply historical; it is existential.

Allah says:

“Indeed, Safa and Marwah are among the symbols of Allah...”

(Surah Al-Baqarah 2:158)

Standing on the plain of Arafah is perhaps the most spiritually intense moment of Hajj. It is said that Hajj is Arafah.

The Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) said:

“Hajj is Arafah.”

(Sunan al-Tirmidhi, 889 – Sahih)

In this sacred gathering, the believer experiences a glimpse of the Day of Judgment.

Allah says:

“Then when you depart from Arafat, remember Allah at al-Mash'ar al-Haram...”

(Surah Al-Baqarah 2:198)

The act of casting stones at the pillars representing Shaytan is not merely symbolic—it reflects the internal struggle against evil.

Allah warns:

“Indeed, Shaytan is an enemy to you; so take him as an enemy...”

(Surah Fatir 35:6)

Sacrifice holds deep spiritual meaning, commemorating the devotion of Prophet Ibrahim.

Allah says:

“Their meat will not reach Allah, nor will their blood, but what reaches Him is piety from you...”

(Surah Al-Hajj 22:37)

When the pilgrim completes Hajj, they are not meant to return the same person.

The Prophet Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said:

“Whoever performs Hajj for the sake of Allah and does not commit any obscenity or wrongdoing will return as pure as the day his mother gave birth to him.”

(Sahih al-Bukhari, 1521; Sahih Muslim, 1350)

He also said:

“An accepted Hajj brings no reward except Paradise.”

(Sahih al-Bukhari, 1773; Sahih Muslim, 1349)

Hajj teaches patience, humility, unity, and submission. It strips away illusions of permanence and reminds us of our inevitable return to Allah.

Allah says:

“And take provisions, but indeed, the best provision is righteousness...”

(Surah Al-Baqarah 2:197)

In a world filled with noise and distraction, Hajj stands as a powerful reminder of what truly matters. It calls the believer to realign their life with divine purpose, to cleanse their heart, and to renew their covenant with Allah.

May every pilgrim not only complete the rites of Hajj but also internalize its meanings so that their hearts become like the Kaaba: a place where only the remembrance of Allah resides.

آمين يا رب العالمين

The 3 Types of Hajj

Hajj is of 3 types: (1) Ifraad (2) Tamatu (3) Qiraan.

The months of Hajj are: Shawwal, Dhul Qada and Dhul Hijjah (until the 10th)

1. **Ifraad:** means that a person performs only Hajj in the months of Hajj.
2. **Tamatu:** A person travelling from outside the Miqaat puts on the ihram and makes the niyyat of umrah only, in the months of hajj. After completing the Umrah, i.e. Tawaaf and Sa’ee, he comes out of ihram by making the halaq (shaving of the head). Thereafter, he puts on the ihram from Makkah Mukarramah and makes niyyat of hajj only.
3. **Qiraan:** A person from outside the miqaat puts on the ihram and makes the niyyat of Umrah and Hajj in one ihram. Upon arrival in Makkah he performs the Umrah. He does not shave the head, but remains in ihram, then it is sunnah for him to make the Tawaaf-e-Qudoom and preferable to make the sa’ee of Hajj after the Tawaaf-e-Qudoom. He would then proceed to Mina, Arafaat as all the Hujjaj do and shave the head only after pelting and Qurbani on the 10th of Dhul Hijjah.

Do’s and Don’ts of Qurbaani

By doing Qurbani we try to show our gratitude to Allah Ta’ala. In reality we should be sacrificing our lives.

MAS’ALA: It is not permissible for a Qaarin (A person performing Hajj-e-Qiran) or Mutamatti (A person performing Hajj-e-Tamatu) to shave the hair before making Qurbaani (slaughtering).

MAS’ALA: It is Waajib for a Qaarin and Mutamatti to slaughter a small animal or to have a share in a large animal. This Qurbaani is to thank Allah Ta’ala that He has given us the opportunity and ability to make Umrah and Hajj. This Qurbaani is known as Damm-e-Tamattu or Damm-e-Qiraan. It is Mustahab upon a mufrid to slaughter an animal.

MAS'ALA: Besides this, the normal Qurbaani is Waajib, if the conditions are found for rendering it Waajib. For a few rands we should not let this opportunity of this great Ibaadat slip away. How unfortunate is that person who has money to buy unnecessary things to take home, and does not offer this Qurbaani or sacrifices a substandard animal, or even offers it elsewhere because of it being cheaper. Is this what we offer the All-Giving, the True Owner of everything including our very selves?

MAS'ALA: The laws regarding the animals are the same as the laws and Masaa'il of Qurbaani. N.B. Be sure to check the age of the animal before slaughtering. The age can be determined by checking the teeth.

MAS'ALA: The normal Qurbaani (made every year) will only become Waajib on a person if he is a Muqem in Makkah Mukarramah and he has cash or kind beyond his necessities, equivalent to the Nisaab.

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Itqan

Itqan is an Arabic term rooted in the concept of performing a task to the highest possible standard. In the spiritual context, it would be to perform deeds with the aim of reaching the spiritual of Ihsaan, the highest possible state whereby one is constantly cognisant of ALLAH'S Presence. The spiritual state of Ihsaan, in its' most basic form requires strict adherence to the all teachings of Islam. Identifying as Believers who follow the religion of Islam, the expectation is for to us practise Islam to the hilt, without reservation.

“O Believers! Enter into Islam wholeheartedly, and do not follow in the footsteps of Shaytaan. Surely, he is your sworn enemy”.

{Holy Qur'an / 2:208}

All Muslims have “entered into Islam”, whether by birth

of through reverting. This honourable distinction has rendered us as brothers and sisters unto each, described in a Hadith as “a single body” (of believers). With this honour the comes responsibility of upholding the tenets of Islam, as best as possible, in word and deed. The Deen (religion) of Islam is not based on the “build a burger” model, whereby you get to pick and choose “ingredients” which fit your flavoured fancy. With absolute clarity and resolute firmness, Islam is entrenched within obedience to the commands of ALLAH, as set out in the Holy Qur'an, and the Sunnah practises and teachings of His beloved Servant and Messenger, Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم

In as much as Muslims are expected to respect people's right of choice, when it comes to religion, it is not upon us to be agreeable or accommodating of their beliefs, if it is in conflict with the teachings of Islam. Muslim apologist often (conveniently) quote the first part of a verse in the Holy Qur'an (2:256), LAA IKRA FID-DEEN... (There is no compulsion in religion...), when engaging with people on matters of faith. The complete verse reads as follows.

“Let there be no compulsion in religion, for truth stands out clear from falsehood. So, whoever rejects false gods and believes in ALLAH has certainly grasped firmest Hand-hold which never breaks, and ALLAH is All-Hearing, All Knowing”.

{Holy Qur'an / 2:256}

In an attempt to subjugate the global masses through “spiritual pacification”, certain groups, totally devoid of any semblance of true spirituality have tabled a document titled THE ABRAHAMIC ACCORD. Named after Ibrahim (Alayhi Salaam) / Abraham (Peace be upon him), the patriarch of Islam, Judaism, and Christianity, this document is being peddled as the means towards religious harmony, when in essence it aims to isolate people from core principles of their faith. From a Muslim standpoint, there can be no acceptance of a faith which is in conflict with

لا اله الا الله محمد رسول الله

There Is no God worthy of worship besides ALLAH, Muhammad is the Messenger of ALLAH.

As Muslims, we strongly believe in and firmly stand by the truth of the Holy Qur'an. I reiterate! Itqan is the act of striving to perform a task to the highest standard.

The highest possible standard of living life, for every Muslim, is according to that which has been practised by our beloved Nabi صلى الله عليه و سلم , set out upon the Millat (religion practises) of the friend of ALLAH, Ibrahim عليه السلام

“Abraham was neither a Jew or a Christian, but he was one inclining towards truth. A Muslim. (one who submits to God), and he was not of the polytheists. {Holy Qur’an / 3:67}

“Who can be better in religion than one who submits his whole self to ALLAH, does good, and follows the way of Abraham, the true in faith? For ALLAH did take Abraham for a friend”.

{Holy Qur’an / 4:125}

Itqan! The highest possible standard. In submitting to ALLAH, no religion sets the bar higher than Islam. With well over a billion Muslims across the globe, in spite of our large numbers, whether as individuals or a collective, we are not a favour to Islam. Islam is ALLAH’S Favour upon us.

“...This day I have perfected for you your religion and completed My favour upon you, and have approved for you Islam as your religion...”

{Holy Qur’an / 5:3}

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